

**Preliminary Amendment of U.S. National Stage for International Application
PCT/EP2003/013922 Filed December 9, 2003**

In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 1-3, without prejudice, and add new claims 4-10 in accordance with the following complete listing of all claims ever presented. This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of the claims in the instant application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-3 (Canceled)

4. (New): A high yield process for the production of conjugated linoleic acid having a high degree of conjugated double bonds, purity and cold temperature stability, said process comprising

- (a) isomerizing linoleic acid lower alkyl esters containing 1 to 5 carbon atoms in a linear or branched alkyl chain in the presence of an alkali metal alcoholate to yield highly conjugated linoleic acid esters,
- (b) saponifying the highly conjugated linoleic acid esters to yield the highly conjugated linoleic acids, and
- (c) crystallizing the highly conjugated linoleic acids one or more times.

5. (New): A process according to claim 4, wherein the crystallization step (c) is carried out at temperatures below 10°C.

6. (New): A process according to claim 4, wherein that the crystallization step (c) is carried out at temperatures below 6°C.

7. (New): A process according to claim 4, further comprising distilling the crystallized highly conjugated linoleic acids obtained in step (c) to remove oligomer impurities.

8. (New): A process according to claim 4, wherein the isomerization step (a) is carried out at temperatures of 100 to 130°C.

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9. (New): A process according to claim 4, wherein the linoleic acid lower alkyl esters have the formula (I):



in which R^1CO is the acyl residue of a linoleic acid and R^2 is a linear or branched C_{1-5} alkyl group.

10. (New): A process according to claim 9, wherein acyl residues of a linoleic acid are conjugated.